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Exploration and Discovery.

THE WINTER IN EGYPT.

DURING the month of July at University College in London Mr. Petrie and his assistants have been holding an exhibition of the material taken by them from the soil of Egypt during the winter of 1896-7. Of Mr. Quibell's success at El Kab we have already given an account in the BIBLICAL WORLD (May 1897). Mr. Petrie achieved the unusual success of discovering and opening an old empire mastaba tomb in a cemetery of the same period at Deshasheh, about fifty miles above Cairo. A fine collection of the remarkable remains which he took from this mastaba are now on their way to Haskell Oriental Museum of the University of Chicago, and on their arrival they will be duly pictured and described to our readers. With this material comes also a representative selection from El Kab.

The most remarkable achievement of the Fund this past winter was the discovery of a great mass of Græco-Roman papyri at Behneseh, eighty miles south of Cairo, by Messrs. Grenfell and Hunt. Our readers are already familiar with the ΛΟΓΙΑ ΙΗΣΟΥ, or "Sayings of Jesus," found with these papyri. This fragment, however interesting and important, is only one of the many revelations already made or to be expected from this great mass of material. Nearly the whole site of Behneseh (ancient Oxyrrynchus) was underlaid more or less plentifully with these papyri. Evidently the city office of Roman administration, unable longer to accommodate such a plethora of archives in its files, had thrown them out wholesale to be burned. For this purpose they were carried out in baskets, and, without emptying from the baskets, were laid in large heaps and fired. Luckily for us, they were too massive to burn well, and, on being covered up by natural accumulations, they have remained undisturbed until last winter. Had Egypt been a land of rains, they must necessarily have long since decayed to dust, but in a country of no rain such material is preserved indefinitely. Such heaps were found in three places, with the ancient baskets still so sturdy that their contents could be carried off safely in them to the camp of the excavators. On one day no less than thirty-six such baskets full were taken out, and again on another day twenty-five. Besides these reject papyri, the town site, as we have stated above, fur-

nished a vast host of fragments, among which were the *ΛΟΓΙΑ* fragment, and, for example, also "one to two hundred *Iliad* MSS., which will give an idea of the wealth of classical documents." "One hundred and fifty of the best rolls" were kept by the Egyptian government for the museum at Gizeh. The rest, comprising 280 boxes, are now being studied at Oxford, and it will take ten to twenty years to edit and publish them all. Nearly all are in Greek, but some are in Latin, Coptic, and Arabic; they date from the first to the ninth century A. D. In such a great mass of material almost anything may be expected to turn up, and to the student of early Christian literature the possibilities are attractive in the extreme, for already in the so-called *Logia* we have revealed to us as a fact the existence of a class of literature about which we could before only theorize.

The Chicago Society of Egyptian Research had a financial interest in these excavations also, and a portion of these papyri are already on their way to Haskell Museum. The importance of this field of excavation has moved the Egypt Exploration Fund in London to establish as a part of their work a "Græco-Roman Branch." They say:

"It is now proposed to establish another department of the Fund, to be specially devoted to the Graeco-Roman period of Egyptian history. This period, of just one thousand years, covers the foundation of Alexandria, the dynasty of the Ptolemies, the organization of the Roman province, and the growth of primitive Christianity. Its annals and its literature must be searched for beneath the sands of Egypt, which faithfully keep the secrets entrusted to them. No other branch of exploration has been more fruitful of results in recent times, or has a brighter outlook for the future. The lost Greek texts that have been recovered from Egypt comprise Aristotle's *Constitution of Athens*, the *Mimes* of Herondas, and the *Odes* of Bacchylides. Of early Christian documents, we have had the gospel and apocalypse of Peter, the book of Enoch, and, lastly, the fragment of *Logia* published herewith. From this source, too, have been derived materials that enable us to reconstruct in some degree the inner life of Egypt, from the last of the Pharaohs to the Arab conquest."

An annual volume of 300 to 400 pages will be published by this branch, and given to every annual subscriber of \$5. We would urge upon every friend of classic or of early Christian literature the importance of supporting this work. Friends of the University also can obtain a double benefit by sending their subscriptions to the Chicago Society of Egyptian Research, for, besides furthering the work, they

will thus receive not merely the annual volume, but will also increase the proportion of papyri to come to Haskell Museum, where all are welcome to see and study them.

Copies of the newly discovered Logia are now at Haskell Museum for all subscribers to the society.¹

DR. PORTER, of the Syrian Protestant College, Beirût, sends to the Quarterly Statement of the Palestine Exploration Fund a copy of a squeeze of a Greek inscription on a gravestone, found near Nazareth. Its probable translation is as follows:

“My father was Quintus, my mother was Philous.
My name is Apion, my fatherland . . . Gadara, fond of the Muses.
My mother, Philous, is of Sophè, the horseless.
Leaving a home (now) childless, I dwell in a tomb at the Three Ways.
. . . my father came after me sorrowing. He mourned for me who
had lived twice eleven years.”

The inscription is significant in showing how Roman influences were about Nazareth. The epithet applied to Gadara is also interesting.

Another discovery reported to the Académie des Inscriptions by M. Héron de Villefosse has been made in the region of Nazareth. It consists of a military report of the year A. D. 139 in which are given the name of the governor of Palestine in that year, P. Calpurnius Atilianus, and the list of the auxiliary troops who had a share in putting down the revolt of Barchokeba.

THERE has recently been announced the discovery of a mosaic map of the country lying to the east of the Mediterranean, in the floor of an ancient church in Mâdeba, on the east of Jordan. From such descriptions as have yet appeared it would seem as if the mosaic dates from the fifth or sixth century of our era, and may aid materially in the identification of several towns, and even in the reconstruction of Jerusalem of late Roman times. In this connection it is noteworthy that the map shows a series of colonnades running between the principal gates of Jerusalem. The map has further archæological interest in that each town or holy place is represented by a building or walls. Reproductions of the map are already issued from photographs made by Father Germer-Durand of Jerusalem.

¹ Address J. H. Breasted, University of Chicago.